

SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

LEA POLICY

IDENTIFYING AND SECURING IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN OR LIKELY TO DO SO

The purpose of this statement is to provide a basis and guidance for the LEA's work on priority 4 of the Education Development Plan (EDP) - Schools Causing Concern. It takes into account the Code of Practice on LEA - School Relations, the School Standards and Framework Act (the statutory framework), Education Act 2002 and guidance provided by OFSTED. It aims to:

- Translate the legal framework into local practice, contribute to better standards and reduce the number of schools causing concern in line with national and local objectives.
- Be open about how the process is handled and make accountability clear. Following experience, the LEA recognises the need for flexibility in applying the policy within the accepted framework in order to respond to a school's individual circumstances.
- Recognise the importance of a joint approach to the problems by the school, LEA and Diocesan Authorities (where appropriate) and a willingness to work together as the best way to tackle them. The intention is to help a school improve by its own efforts rather than take away its responsibility for self-improvement.
- Contribute to the LEA's school improvement strategy. It applies the four main concepts of monitoring, intervention, challenge and support and deals with the early identification of and support for schools causing concern.
- Provide guidance and operational materials for staff and Governing Bodies in schools and the LEA, as given in the appendices.

What is a school causing concern?

There are five types of schools that come under the general category 'causing concern':

- Schools identified by OFSTED as requiring 'special measures'
- Schools identified by OFSTED as having 'serious weaknesses'
- Schools identified by OFSTED as 'underachieving'
- Schools identified by the LEA as being of 'Local Concern'.
- Schools identified by the LEA as being in need of 'special support', usually in the short term and for a variety of reasons. This is a category designated by the LEA to prevent the need to proceed to more formal powers of intervention. Schools identified by the DfES as 'Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances' are included in this category.

In addition there are schools identified by the application of DfES criteria requiring additional support:-

- Primary Schools in the Leadership Support Programme

What are the LEA's formal powers of intervention?

The School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA Section 14-17), Education Act 2002 and the Code of Practice on Local Education Authority - School Relations define the LEA's powers of intervention in schools. They are broadly the power to:

- Issue a formal warning;
- Appoint additional governors;
- Suspend a governing body's right to a delegated budget;
- Appoint an Interim Executive Board;
- Obtain an external partner to support the school;
- Inspect a school to collect information to exercise its functions, which cannot practically be collected in other ways;
- Issue directions to the headteacher or governing body of a school to prevent or put right a breakdown of discipline.

The Authority can also issue directions concerning the health and safety of people on school premises or taking part in school activities off-site (SSFA Section 39 (3)).

It is the intention of the LEA to use the statutory powers of formal intervention as a last resort. They come into operation when OFSTED has placed a school in special measures or declared it to have serious weaknesses or be underachieving, or where the Authority has similar acute concerns about the likely outcome for the school if no intervention occurs. The following sections define the specific circumstances.

What is the process for addressing concerns?

1. In schools becoming subject to special measures or identified by OFSTED as having serious weaknesses or as underachieving the procedures following the Registered Inspector's judgement are:

- The school's link school improvement officer briefs the Deputy Director (School Improvement)
- The LEA considers the use of their intervention powers.
- The LEA identifies a project officer to coordinate the work of the LEA through these procedures and a senior school improvement officer to monitor the work of the project officer. The project officer will usually be the link school improvement officer but in some instances another senior officer with skills and knowledge appropriate to the particular key issues may take this role.

- The project officer works closely with the headteacher and governing body of the school and, if appropriate, the Diocese, to draw up the action plan starting immediately following the inspectors' oral feedback. The project officer role is one of a 'critical friend' ensuring the governors have ownership of their action plan. Details of the project officer role are given in Appendix 9.
- The project officer prepares a commentary on the school's plan and a statement of action to be submitted alongside the school's action plan if the school has serious weaknesses or is underachieving, or within ten days of the production of the school action plan in the case of schools in special measures.

The statement of action should provide a detailed explanation of the options for the future of the school. It should:

- assess the scope for the school to be closed, including an examination of the number of surplus places in better performing local schools;
- where the school is to remain open, specify a target for recovery from special measures or serious weaknesses within 2 years from the date of receipt of the inspection report;
- explain the action the LEA has taken, and will take, to support the school (including resource allocations, and quantified targets for evaluating the effectiveness of the LEA support);
- clarify decisions made about involving external support;
- clarify the extent to which local authority services and partners will support the school;
- propose alternative action if the LEA's commentary has said that the governing body's action plan is unlikely to be effective in whole or in part; and
- make clear whether the LEA intends to use its powers to appoint additional governors (and if so, name them and give details of their expertise); suspend the right to a delegated budget; or replace the governing body with an Interim Executive Board.

The School Improvement Team in Ofsted will evaluate the school's action plan and the LEA's statement and advise on any areas of weakness.

The LEA's statement of action relates directly to the school's action plan. The two documents have similar layout, structure and linked actions. Cross-referencing is used - for example - the school's plan is likely to contain references to the LEA's support, monitoring and evaluation, and these references can be traced directly to the LEA's statement. Costs are specific and referenced to the school's plan. The actions are timed to coincide with the school's priorities.

In terms of timescales for improvement, the requirement from Ofsted is that:

- schools exit special measures within two years;
- schools eliminate serious weaknesses within two years of receiving the inspection report
- schools underachievement is improved within twelve months

The LEA's commentary for a school in special measures or with serious weaknesses provides an assessment of the school's ability to implement its action plan. It:

- Assesses the effectiveness of the governing body's action plan
 - Sets out any points governors have neglected to cover in the plan
 - States how long the LEA has been aware of the school's problems and the action taken to remedy them
 - Assesses the likely effectiveness of any external partners plan of action
 - Sets out how the LEA will monitor and support the school
- Monitoring by Directorate Staff during the period of support includes:
 - The Lead Member for education currently meets weekly with the Director of Education and Leisure and is briefed as required
 - The Leadership Team of the Directorate receives regular updates on the situation and on progress at the team's weekly meetings
 - A schools causing concern group, consisting of representatives from all services (e.g. finance, personnel, buildings, curriculum development and IAS), meets ½ termly with the Deputy Director for School Improvement to coordinate responses in these schools and outcomes are reported to the Lead Member for Education
 - The Senior Phase school improvement officer meets weekly with the project officer and is briefed on developments
 - The Deputy Director with responsibility for School Improvement meets with the Senior Phase School improvement officer and the project officer to evaluate the action plan two weeks before its due date for completion.
 - The project officer/schools link school improvement officer carries out a review of progress with the action plan to evaluate the rate of progress each half term. The project officer completes Appendix 6 and Appendix 7 is completed by the school.
 - The project officer/schools link school improvement officer is present during HMI feedback from monitoring visits to account for the effectiveness of the LEA's action and respond to feedback.
 - For schools with serious weaknesses and those underachieving the LEA carries out a review every six months until the school is re-inspected and found to be providing at least a satisfactory education for its pupils. After six months the LEA must decide whether enough progress has been made. Appendix 8 outlines the format for these reviews.
 - Following the ending of the special measures/serious weaknesses/underachieving categorisation the LEA continues to support the school in its further development, particularly in the identified areas, but tapering its involvement over an agreed timescale to the level normally provided to schools under LEA arrangements with schools.

2. In schools in need of special support or causing local concern.

The LEA, in partnership with schools, is anxious to identify difficulties, which may arise in schools at an early stage. By promptly helping schools tackle difficulties more serious problems may be avoided. Experience to date has been that while clear procedures are necessary, so is a degree of flexibility of response.

The LEA considers that there is a strong partnership for improvement and background of mutual respect between people in schools and its own staff. This is seen, by both partners as beneficial and supportive. Most problems can be solved swiftly by appropriate action. Occasionally this action may not be sufficient and the LEA finds it necessary to identify a school as causing concern.

To ensure that there is an up-to-date overview of the situation in schools, the schools causing concern groups provides an opportunity for discussion on the performance of any school in the LEA. Schools can be included for consideration at any time should new evidence or urgent matters arise through fortnightly meetings of the Directorate Leadership Team of the School Improvement Service (School inspection reports are considered by the service each month and progress is monitored after a further six months).

When a concern is initially identified, a call for evidence (see Appendix 1) is initiated by the Deputy Director (School Improvement) or the Senior Phase school improvement officer. The headteacher and governing body (or the chair of governors) will be consulted and asked to contribute their views about the concerns identified and preferred options. Occasionally, it may be necessary to visit a school to clarify the actual situation. This does not indicate that the school has been identified as causing concern. It is an information gathering exercise at this stage.

The Directorate Leadership Team considers the information. Schools causing concern is a standing item agenda item. The options, likely concerns and outcomes are:

A. To identify the school as in need of 'special support'.

The initial letter (see Appendix 4) will be sent to the school to inform it of the concern(s), identify a reasonable period to address these and initiate special support. The types of concern likely to lead to the need for this are:

Schools where there is a new headteacher and aspects of its work need improvement or substantial improvement or the unavoidable prolonged or spasmodic absence of the headteacher or of other key staff such as through illness;

Surplus places review, amalgamation or closure;

Schools that have been taken out of special measures or serious weaknesses for a defined period of consolidation of improvement;

The Governing Body and/or headteacher asks because self-evaluation reveals certain issues;

The school's standards in core subjects are consistently below similar schools and improvement plans or targets are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils or for identified groups of pupils;

The DfES has identified the school as one 'Facing Challenging Circumstances' – the school attained 25% or less 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C in any one year over the last three years;

The school has known capability issues but is not addressing them;

Vacancies are difficult to fill and remain vacant for a long time. The school has a sudden change of staff and/or pupil numbers beyond the schools control;

There are high and persistent levels complaints about the school from parents, pupils, teachers and/or teacher associations

Accommodation - major matters, e.g. health and safety concerns. The school has a fire or major vandalism;

There is evidence of issues in quality of teaching and/or learning;

There are serious concerns about management;

Concerns are raised by other agencies working regularly in the school, e.g. EAZ;

Urgent matters regarding pupils' welfare, safety or behaviour;

Other indicators, such as budget deficit, staff absence levels, governing body vacancies; attendance and exclusion levels raise persistent and unresolved questions;

Or a combination of these factors.

The link school improvement officer allocates an additional number of days to work with the school and liaise with the headteacher to ensure that the school improvement plan addresses the issues. The link school improvement officer will identify the various areas of support needed from LEA services (see 'range of support measurers available' below) and ensure these are allocated and implemented effectively.

Records of progress are kept using the standard record of visit and a summary record completed (see Appendix 6). The Senior Phase school improvement officer monitors these developments and reports to the Management Team termly. Where these procedures operate with a ready acceptance on the part of the school and there is improvement within an acceptable timescale (usually within six months) the emphasis is upon support and challenge and further action will not be necessary. If, however, despite very firm evidence, a school does not recognise that it has a problem or concerns persist the second option may be adopted.

B. Identify the school as causing a local concern.

The specific circumstances for these formal procedures are:

- The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so unless the LEA takes formal intervention measures.
- There has been a serious breakdown in the way that the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing or is likely to prejudice, pupils' standards of performance.
- That the safety of pupils or staff of the school is threatened, whether by breakdown of discipline or otherwise

Appendix 2 includes questions for the LEA and school to consider before deciding to use formal powers.

The school is informed that the LEA has placed it in this category (see letter Appendix 5). This will only occur following a period as a school receiving special support and the governing body and headteacher will have been informed of the matters causing concern. There will be a clear explanation of how the use of intervention powers is required in order to support the school's action plan.

The stages of intervention are:

1. The school receives 'special support' but the situation remains largely unchanged.
2. Monitoring and review identify a lack of or insufficient progress in making improvements
3. The LEA Director's Management Team decides to issue a 'Formal Warning'. The letter is sent to the school (see Appendix 5)
4. Formation of an agreed action plan
5. 'Compliance period' - governing body take the action required. Length of period will vary. Where children are at risk, action should be immediate. In other cases the period will be at least one month and usually one term.
6. Review visit to school to assess progress (see Appendix 9)

7. Notice that additional governors be appointed and/or delegation is to suspended, if appropriate.
8. Appoint an Interim Executive Board.
9. Obtain an external partner to support the school if appropriate.
10. Formal reviews by two or three school improvement officers every term. These reviews will report progress on the key concerns identified and be considered by the LEA Management Team. Appendix 9 outlines the format of the review.

Additional time is allocated from a member of the School Improvement Service to:

- Assist the school in writing an action plan
- Provide management advice and challenge.
- Make half-termly monitoring of progress checks. The link school improvement officer completes Appendix 7 and the school completes Appendix 8.

What is the range of measures available to support schools?

For all schools considered in this statement the LEA has a core of strategies that have proved effective and adapts these to different situations, in particular:

- Action planning expertise
- Project officers to coordinate support, challenge and monitoring
- Mentor headteachers or middle managers
- External partners (see Appendix 11)
- Involvement of a Beacon School, Specialist School or advanced skills or lead teachers
- Advice on monitoring, evaluation and feedback with the aim of building a school's capacity for self-evaluation, such as moderation of the judgements of school managers on standards and quality
- Visits to/from schools that have 'been there' and improved, beacon schools and specialist schools
- Analysis and interpretation of performance data
- Detailed support and challenge to improve the quality of teaching, improve lesson planning and the pace of learning. Provide training in line with individual/departmental strengths and weaknesses.
- Targeted input on specific aspects of school management from personnel, finance, governor services and property management teams as appropriate
- Intensive support from literacy and/or numeracy consultants.
- Expertise from Project Staff, e.g. Key Stage 3 consultants, EiC staff
- Recommendation to participate in particular CPD activities e.g. Headfirst

How does the LEA know it is successful?

Key indicators for evaluation are:

- The number of schools in special measures, serious weaknesses, underachieving and local cause for concern.

Success indicators:

- Less than national averages
- 10% less than statistical neighbours
- Schools “come out” within the given time frame or sooner
- The number coming out of the categories is more than the number going in
- Standards improve in these schools
- Provision of support measures prevent schools becoming local concern

School:						
Date of Management Team Meeting:						
	Serious Concern	Some Concern		Evidence and from which Teams(s)	Action By	
Educational Standards Achieved						
Attainment and progress in the subjects of the National Curriculum						
Subjects	Att	Pro	Att	Pro	Team(s)	
English						
Mathematics						
Science						
Design & Technology						
Information Technology						
History						
Geography						
Modern Foreign Languages						
Music						
Art						
P.E.						
Overall						
Religious Education						
Other curricular provision						
Examination/SAT Results Targets compared with similar schools						
Behaviour						
Discipline						
Level of exclusions						
Level of racial tension or harassment						
Attendance						
Truancy						

Schools Causing Concern Policy

	Serious Concern	Some Concern	Evidence and from which Teams(s)	Action By
Quality of Education Provided				
Teaching				
Expectations of pupils				
Implementation of National Curriculum				
Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development				
Pupils are Physical/Emotional risk from:				
* Other pupils				
* Adults				
Relationships between staff and pupils				
The Management and Efficiency of the school				
Effectiveness of headteacher				
Effectiveness of other senior managers				
Effectiveness of the governors				
Confidence in the headteacher by:				
* Staff				
* Parents				
* Governors				
Demoralisation and disenchantment among staff				
Level of staff turnover/absence				

Schools Causing Concern Policy

	Serious Concern	Serious Concern	Evidence and from which Teams(s)	Action By
Management and use made of the resources, including finance, available to the school				
Value for money provided by the school				
Accommodation				
Other				
Summary:				

**FOR USE PRIOR TO A DECISION
TO USE FORMAL POWERS**

Questions the LEA should ask:

In deciding whether to use its intervention powers, the LEA should ask itself the following questions:

What course of action will best serve the interests of the pupils at the school, particularly by promoting higher standards?

What evidence is there of a problem? Does the issue reflect a legitimate difference of view about the right way to proceed, or is the school's performance demonstrably inadequate on some objective measures?

Is the problem significant enough to warrant LEA involvement? Or, under the principle of school self-management, should it be left to the school's discretion as falling within the governing body's legal responsibility for the conduct of the school?

What form of intervention, and by whom, will best secure improvement in standards? Would help from another school or support from consultants be more effective than use of the LEA's own staff?

What will be the impact of intervention of the development of a constructive, longer-term relationship between the LEA and the school? Will intervention now damage the relationship and will the benefit outweigh that cost?

How would the LEA explain its actions publicly to a third party, including to the Secretary of State if there was a complaint that its actions breached this Code?

Questions the School should ask:

The governing body and headteacher for their part should ask themselves:

What course of action will best serve the interests of the pupils at the school, particularly by promoting higher standards?

If the LEA believes the school can and should do better, what are our grounds for disputing that? Have we looked carefully at the evidence, including how our school compares to other similar schools? Are we sure that we are not making excuses for low expectations, or perpetuating ineffective ways of doing things merely because that is the way they have always been done?

Schools Causing Concern Policy

Are we striking the right balance in being loyal to staff, pupils and parents without being over protective and unduly resistant to suggestions for doing things better? Are we letting personalities or past history get in the way of focussing on standards and performance?

In pursuing our primary responsibility to promote the interests of our school, what is the impact on others of the approach we are taking?

Have we tried to identify a constructive way forward, which we can propose to the LEA?

How would the school explain its actions publicly to a third party including the Secretary of State if there was a complaint that its actions breached this Code?

LEA POWERS

Introduction

1. The LEA has a duty to monitor, support and challenge schools, and to take decisive action where schools are causing concern before the school receives an adverse inspection report. The aim should always be to provide support before using any formal powers of intervention.
2. Schools should seek LEA support where problems are emerging. Effective and open communication between schools and LEAs is essential. LEAs should work closely with schools and, where appropriate, with other stakeholders, including the Diocese or other appointing authority.
3. Where schools are placed in special measures or judged to have serious weaknesses, new powers introduced in the *Education Act 2002* allow LEAs, in partnership with the Diocese or other appropriate appointing body where appropriate, to intervene at an earlier stage in the process. They also enable LEAs to consider the temporary replacement of a governing body with an Interim Executive Board where schools have not complied with a formal warning, are placed in special measures or are judged to have serious weaknesses.

Use of a formal warning

4. The LEA can issue a formal warning notice to the governing body of a maintained school where:
 - the standard of performance of pupils at the school is unacceptably low and likely to remain so unless the LEA appoints additional governors and/or suspends the school's delegated budget;
 - there has been a serious breakdown in the way in which the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or is likely to prejudice, pupils' standard of performance; or
 - the safety of pupils or staff of the school is threatened, whether by breakdown of discipline or otherwise.
5. The LEA may only issue such a notice if:
 - the LEA has previously informed the governing body and the headteacher of the matters which have caused it to conclude that one or more of the tests above is met; and
 - those matters have not been remedied to the LEA's satisfaction within a reasonable period.

6. The formal warning notice must set out:
 - a. the matters which have caused the LEA to conclude that one or more of the tests is met;
 - b. the action which the LEA requires the governing body to take to remedy those matters; and
 - c. the period within which that action is to be taken by the governing body (the compliance period).
7. If the governing body does not comply with a formal warning notice, the LEA can take one or both of the first two of the following steps, or the third step:
 - a. to appoint additional governors to the school's governing body;
 - b. to suspend the school's delegated budget; or
 - c. to replace the governing body with an Interim Executive Board

Where an Interim Executive Board is appointed, the LEA cannot suspend the schools right to a delegated budget. Where an Interim Executive Board is appointed to a school, which does not have a delegated budget, the suspension of the right to a delegated budget is revoked. Neither the LEA nor the Secretary of State can appoint additional governors while the Interim Executive Board is in place.

LEA powers of intervention

To appoint additional governors

8. The LEA can appoint unlimited numbers of additional governors to a school in the following circumstances:
 - when a school requires special measures or has serious weaknesses, the LEA may use its intervention powers from ten days after the DfES has notified the LEA that HMCI has informed the Secretary of State that a school requires special measures or has serious weaknesses. This is to provide adequate time for the Secretary of State to consider whether he wishes to use his own powers of intervention at that stage; or
 - if the school has been subject to a **formal warning**, the LEA may appoint additional governors within two months of the end of the formal warning compliance period and after it has informed the governing body and the headteacher in writing that it intends to use this power.
 - An LEA cannot appoint additional governors to a school if the Secretary of State has already appointed, or has stated that he intends to appoint, additional governors to that school.

To suspend the right to a delegated budget

9. The LEA may suspend the governing body's right to a delegated budget in the following circumstances:
 - when a school requires special measures or has serious weaknesses, the LEA may use its intervention powers from ten days after the DfES has notified the LEA that HMCI has informed the Secretary of State that a school requires special measures or has serious weaknesses. This is to provide adequate time for the Secretary of State to consider whether he wishes to use his own powers of intervention; or
 - if the school has been subject to a **formal warning**, the LEA may suspend the right to a delegated budget within two months of the end of the formal warning compliance period and after it has informed the governing body and the headteacher in writing that it intends to use this power.
10. **The removal of delegation by the LEA should, where possible, be a measure to assist and support the school.** The LEA should continue to work with the governing body and, where applicable, the Diocese or other appropriate appointing authority, keeping them informed of decisions taken. In addition, the school's governing body will continue to have a responsibility to ensure that teaching standards are effectively monitored and that the school is meeting its statutory requirements in respect of the curriculum. Both the LEA and the governing body should be working towards a point when delegation can be returned to the school as quickly as possible.
11. In community and voluntary controlled schools, the LEA will take responsibility for personnel issues and the school budget. In the case of voluntary aided and foundation schools, the governing body remains the employer of staff, but the LEA is able to set conditions over personnel issues. These include determining the complement of staff at the school, a requirement to give consent to the appointment or dismissal of staff, and the power to give directions to the governing body as to the educational qualifications of staff to be appointed to the school.
12. The LEA must give the governing body written notice (and, at the same time, send a copy to the headteacher and, where applicable, the Diocese or other appropriate appointing body) of the intention to suspend the governing body's right to a delegated budget. The suspension has effect from receipt of the LEA's letter. There is no right of appeal against the suspension.

Other measures

13. In certain circumstances, an LEA may also replace a governing body with a specially constituted governing body, known as an Interim Executive Board (see advice on the DfES standards website).

INITIAL LETTER - SCHOOL TO RECEIVE SPECIAL SUPPORT

Dear *(Name of Chair of Governors/Headteacher)*

As part of the LEA's regular monitoring of schools, concerns have been identified in (school name) in the following areas and for these reasons:

Standards relating to () because (summary reason/evidence/figures)

Management relating to () because (summary)

Discipline relating to () because (summary)

Other matters relating to () because (summary)

In line with its policy for schools needing 'special support' and likely to cause concern the LEA wishes to identify a 'reasonable period' for the governing Body to address these matters, after which a warning notice may be issued if the concerns are not satisfactorily resolved.

The period within which they should be addressed is () months, by (date).

The LEA continues to wish to work preventatively and jointly to resolve difficulties in the best interests of pupils. While responsibility to resolve the issues is in the hands of the school, the LEA would wish to give support, initially to identify causes and plan actions. The school's Link School Improvement Officer will make contact with you and will explain arrangements for support, formation of a plan of action and monitoring.

Should you have any immediate queries, please contact me (0161 778 0135).

Yours sincerely

Deputy Director
(School Improvement)

FORMAL WARNING LETTER

Dear (Name of Chair of Governor/Headteacher)

Concerns the LEA has about (name) school and about progress in addressing them

The LEA wrote to you on () setting out certain concerns, the reasons for them and a reasonable period within which the governing body should address them. (Repeat concern/summary evidence/date specified from Letter 1).

The LEA has looked carefully at the steps the school has taken and their impact in resolving the problems. As a result, the LEA considers that there has not been enough progress because (reasons/evidence, e.g. action has not been taken or consistently implemented; levels of pupil attainment/parental complains/exclusions remain).

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about actions the LEA regards it as important for the school to take, and the timescales for that action. Should the school not address the issues the LEA may withdraw delegated powers and/or make additional appointments to the Governing Body.

(Main actions and dates in bold)

Under the terms of the School Standards and Framework Act (1998 Section 15(2)) and Education Act 2002, this letter is a formal warning and gives notice of the LEA's intention. The period within which the school should comply is by (date). A copy of the relevant LEA document is enclosed. A copy of this letter is also being sent to the schools (Headteacher/Chair of governors).

The Deputy Director (School Improvement) will contact you within three days to discuss the implications of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Director of Education and Leisure

Copy to: (Chair of Governor/Headteacher)

(Taken to school. Meeting with Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Signed by Director)

**PROVISION OF SPECIAL SUPPORT
SUMMARY RECORD TO MANAGEMENT TEAM**

NAME:

SCHOOL:

DATE:

WHAT IS THE CONCERN?

EVIDENCE?

WHO IS AWARE OF IT? (In school, in LEA, other agencies, parents)

WHAT SUPPORT IS BEING PROVIDED.

**RECORD OF HALF-TERMLY PROGRESS MEETING
SPECIAL MEASURES, SERIOUS WEAKNESSES, UNDERACHIEVING,
CAUSING CONCERN**

SCHOOL:
DATE:
PRESENT:
LEA:
STAFF:
GOVERNORS:

MAIN EVIDENCE USED

KEY ISSUES (Progress with actions, impact, developmental points)

EVALUATION (*is progress very good, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory and reason. Overall judgement*)

AMENDMENTS TO PLANS	
SCHOOL ACTION PLAN	LEA ACTION
COSTS	
OTHER EXTERNAL FUNDS:	
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICE:	
OTHER SERVICE	
SIGNED: LEA _____	STAFF _____
GOVERNORS _____	

**SCHOOLS MAY FIND IT HELPFUL TO COMPLETE THIS FORM
IN PREPARATION FOR A REVIEW**

SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF:

KEY ISSUE:

IMPACT - success criteria and milestones in action plan

EVIDENCE (reference monitoring and evaluation aspect of plan aspects of)

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VARIATIONS TO TIMING OF ACTIONS (*slippage/changes*)

NEXT STEPS (*If different from action plan*)

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*

*

*

Signed:

(Chair of Governors)

(Headteacher)

**FORMAT FOR REVIEW
(serious weaknesses, underachievement, local concern schools)**

1. Purpose

To review the progress made by the school in implementing its action plan submitted in response to OFSTED inspection/local concern.

2. Process

A team of two to four inspector-advisers will visit the school. They will observe lessons, review pupils' work, review documentation and interview staff and governors with management/leadership responsibilities.

3. Aspects to be covered

The key issues or aspects from the original report will form the basis of the evaluation and feedback.

4. Outcomes

A formal report will be written which will include:

- An introduction which describes the process and evidence base
- A report on progress in each key issue/aspect
- An evaluation of progress in each key issue/aspect
- Development points for future action.

The draft of this report will be discussed with the headteacher and amendments made, if necessary. The final report will be presented to and discussed with governors.

THE ROLE OF THE PROJECT OFFICER

MAIN ROLE

The Project Officer is a School Improvement Officer or member of another LEA team who is the first point of contact during special measures/serious weaknesses/underachievement/local concern to coordinate strategies, support and challenge so that the school's recovery is as rapid as possible and meets statutory time scales. All School Improvement Officers have Project Officer work as part of the post description (June 2003). The Project Officer is allocated on the basis of the school's needs and circumstances and match with the person's experience, and skill.

DETAILS

To form an open, frank and productive relationship with the Headteacher, so that each is able to say clearly when something needs to change in the school or in an LEA service.

In keeping with the role of School Improvement Officers overall. To keep an objective view based on evidence and to be well briefed about the school.

To promote the school's capacity for self-monitoring and evaluation, moderate judgements and ensure they are rigorous, soundly based and match external criteria.

To work with the Governing Body, staff of the school and staff of the Local Authority to ensure understanding and acceptance of findings and accurately identify barriers to be overcome for recovery.

To communicate directly with people in the Authority as needed, including with Heads of Service, Director of Education and Leisure and Assistant Directors, the Schools Causing Concern group and other sections.

To work with the school to ensure that the Governors' Action Plan is a clear guide to action and improvement, meets statutory requirements and establishes target dates.

To draft the LEA statement and commentary and if needed the Formal Letter for approval by Head of Service and Director.

To be in regular contact with the Headteacher and visit the school for monitoring, support and challenge in line with plans and review of them and alert others if problems occur.

Schools Causing Concern Policy

To co-ordinate visits of officers designated to provide support etc. and follow them up in line with the Action Plan/to maintain and overview.

To attend meetings of the SCC group to review and record progress and any changes to school or LEA plans.

To prepare for and represent the LEA on HMI visits, prepare for any DfES visits and accompany a Senior Phase/School Improvement Officer or the Deputy Director to feedback meetings.

To take part in hand-over arrangements after special measures/serious weaknesses, inspections, evaluations of the role and share good practice with others.

PARTNERS WHICH LEA MAY USE WITH SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

The LEA will use the power to engage partners with the necessary experience which matches the individual needs and circumstances of schools.

The LEA has used and will continue to use the following partners when appropriate.

- **External Consultants**
such as
 - John Rowe
 - Lois Furness
 - Vicky Rigby
 - Maureen Marsh
- **Private Companies**
such as
 - Nord Anglia
 - Capita
 - Chase Russell
- **Beacon Schools**
within and external to the LEA
- **Specialist Schools**
within and external to the LEA
- **Other LEAs**
such as
 - Trafford
 - Rochdale
- **Institutes of Higher Education**
such as
 - Manchester Metropolitan University
 - Manchester University
- **Recently retired Headteacher with appropriate skills and expertise for the task in hand**

